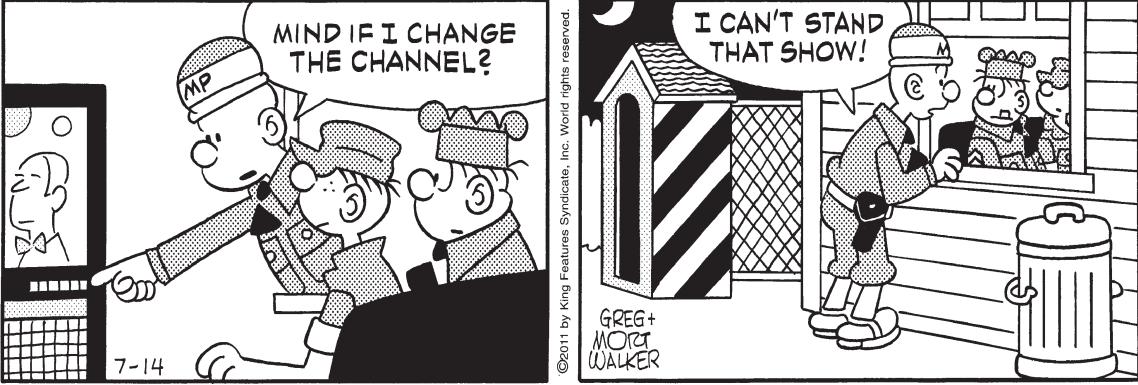


Baby Blues • Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



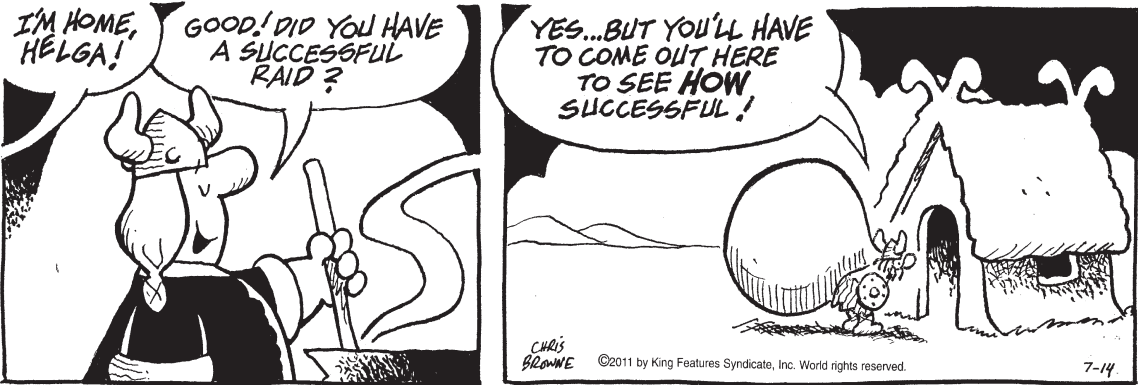
Beetle Bailey • Mort Walker



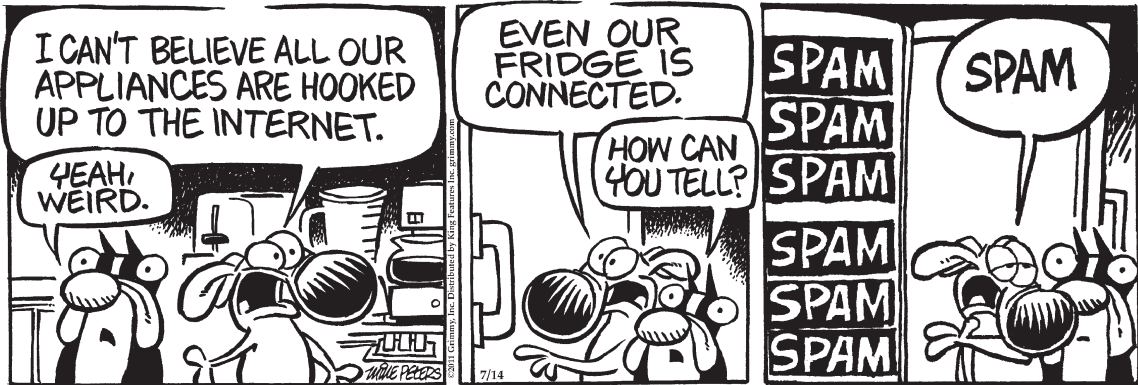
Blondie • Chic Young



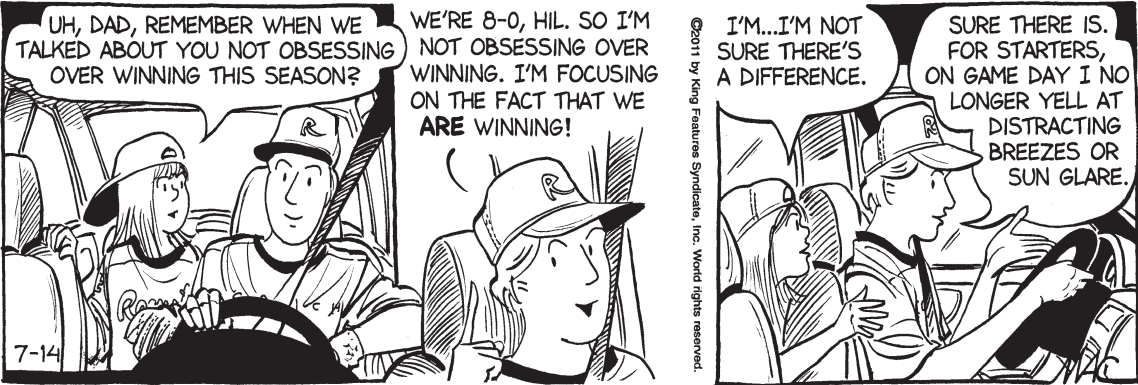
Hagar the Horrible • Chris Browne



Mother Goose and Grimm • Mike Peters



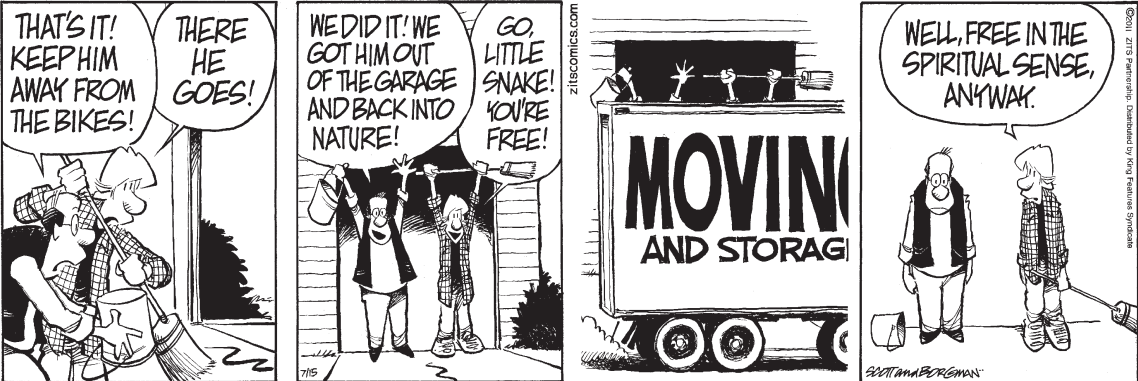
Sally Forth • Greg Howard



Todd the Dinosaur • Patrick Roberts



Zits • Jim Borgman & Jerry Scott



Dr. Joyce Brothers
• Ask Dr. Brothers

Baby's infections
a constant worry

Dear Dr. Brothers: My 15-month-old baby is as cute as can be. The problem is, she is so easily infected by everything going around at day care that we spend most of the time just trying to get her well. I have lots of things I want to do with her, but so far it has been just trying to get her well enough to go to day care so I can go to my job. Is there anything I can do about my mental health? It seems I am always worrying about my baby and we don't have any fun at all. — G.L.

Dear G.L.: Nobody said parenting would be easy, but by the same token, it needn't be all stress and worry, either. The fact that you feel you are not having any of the "fun" part should be a red flag — and you should consider being evaluated for postpartum depression before things get worse. You probably can find many resources for new mothers — and they don't have to be medical. Even joining a baby-and-mom group weekly will help your mood, as you will be exposed to other mothers. Other mothers can be a wealth of information and comfort.

Since day care seems to be one big pool of germs, consider having a baby sitter in your home instead of taking your baby to a group setting. She needs a chance to recover, and as she does, you will find the fun starting again. If you can't get a baby sitter, at least consider changing providers, focusing on the healthfulness of the setting. It could be the place you are going now is too crowded or unsanitary. You need to be proactive, solve this and start enjoying your baby.

Dear Dr. Brothers: I consider myself a tough cookie, but there is one subject I can't stand to hear about, and that is teen suicide. It seems as a parent there is nothing worse you could experience. I look at my two little kids, 3 and 5, and can't imagine how I could fail them. Have you got any tips for parents who want their kids to never be in danger of suicide? — C.S.

Dear C.S.: Pretty much every parent is upset by talk of teen suicide, and many can't imagine how they would go on if it were to happen. We like to think we are sensitive to our children's feelings and problems, and that we will be there for them to help them through the rough spots. Surely our child would never become so desperate over something in their lives — or in their head — that we would miss the signs and not be there until it was too late. Being different is always difficult. And gay students and bullied kids are more likely to attempt suicide. But they are not alone.

So we obsess about whether our child is really OK, or just putting on a show. Most of these fears are irrational, as suicide is still an uncommon event. A new study from Columbia University found the community has some influence on whether gay and straight teens commit suicide. Areas in which groups promote acceptance and anti-bullying toward gay students were healthier for both gay and straight kids. To ease your mind, become active in promoting tolerance.

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Bridge • Steve Becker

East dealer.
Both sides vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 7 5 4 3
♥ 8 6 2
♦ 1 9 8 7 4 3

WEST
♠ K J 10 8 6 5 4
♥ 9 8
♦ 10 4 3
♣ 10

EAST
♠ A Q 9 7 3 2
♥ A K Q J 9 7
♦ A Q
♣ Q

SOUTH
♠ A K Q J 10 6 2
♥ 5
♦ A K 6 5 2

The bidding:
East 2♠ South 2♥ West 2♣ North 3♥
2♥ 2♥ 2♥ 2♥
4♥ 5♥ 5♠ 5♠
6♣ 7♥ Dbl Pass

Opening lead — ten of clubs.

Believe It or Not

Most team-of-four contests today are scored by a scale that converts total point differences attained on each deal into International Match Points. For example, a difference of 20 to 40 points in the outcome at the two tables is scored as a gain of 1 IMP for the team that is plus. The scale continues upward from there.

The maximum IMP score possible is 24 and can be achieved only if one team earns a net gain of 4,000 points or more at the two tables. In practice, this highly unusual result is experienced perhaps once or twice in a player's lifetime. Today's deal, which occurred in a national team championship, furnishes one of the few recorded specimens of this exceedingly rare genus.

At one table, the bidding went as shown, with East-West arriving at six spades after East had opened with a strong and artificial two-club bid. At this point, South, holding a considerably better-than-average hand of his own, opted to bid seven hearts, partly as a sacrifice and partly on the off chance that he might actually make the grand slam.

West now had to find the only opening lead that could defeat seven hearts — a diamond. With little to guide him, he tried his singleton club — a move that did not meet with great success. After winning the club, declarer drew trumps and discarded his losing diamond on dummy's sixth club to score 2,470 points.

At the other table, the bidding was equally spirited, and East-West again reached six spades. But here South elected to double rather than try seven hearts. The defenders took their club trick, and declarer scored the rest for plus 1,660.

The combined total of the two results came to 4,130 points, breaking the 24-IMP barrier with a bit to spare. The lone saving grace for those on the losing side was that the extra 130 points cost them nothing at all!

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Family Circus • Bil Keane



“How come fairy tales never happen around our neighborhood?”

Conceptis Sudoku • Dave Green

	7					1	9	
6				5				8
			7	4		6		5
		1					4	
	5				9			
	4				3			
8		7		1	2			
4			8					7
	9	2					3	

Difficulty Level ★★

7/14

This is a logic-based number placement puzzle. The goal is to enter a number, 1-9, in each cell in which each row, column and 3x3 region must contain only one instance of each numeral. The solution to the last Sudoku puzzle is at right.

8	3	4	2	9	1	6	7	5
5	2	7	3	6	4	1	8	9
1	6	9	8	7	5	3	2	4
4	5	3	7	1	8	9	6	2
2	8	6	5	3	9	7	4	1
7	9	1	4	2	6	5	3	8
6	4	5	1	8	3	2	9	7
9	1	2	6	4	7	8	5	3
3	7	8	9	5	2	4	1	6

Difficulty Level ★★

Cryptoquip

LM ZNB JGAU UN CLTX SBCY

SBAAZ G TXQZ ENYUHZ

CLMU, VLCDU ZNB SBZ DLV

G UJXHTX-EGQQNU QLAC?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ANY TIME THAT GUY FEELS AS THOUGH HIS BAD BREATH COULD USE SOME FRESHENING, HE INSERTS CERTS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals Y

Crossword • Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 Summer-time pest
 - 5 Leap
 - 8 Mountain goat
 - 12 Opulent
 - 13 Forest bird
 - 14 Thailand, once
 - 15 From the beginning
 - 16 Born
 - 17 Taj Mahal city
 - 18 Curie or Pompadour
 - 20 Straightens
 - 22 Trigger's rider
 - 23 Scull tool
 - 24 Unpaid bill
 - 27 Important person
 - 32 — Baba
 - 33 Popular card game
 - 34 Greek vowel
 - 35 Pre-WWII music-makers
 - 38 Kentucky fort
- DOWN**
- 1 Metric unit
 - 2 1492 vessel
 - 3 Served perfectly
 - 4 Frustrate
 - 5 "South Pacific" song
 - 6 Have 24-
 - 7 Entreaty
 - 8 Book before Jeremiah
 - 9 Dartmouth team
 - 10 Deserve
 - 11 Opening day?
 - 19 37-Down, for ex.
 - 21 De-pressed
 - 24 Slight touch
 - 25 Inventor Wallach
 - 26 New York City
 - 28 Third-party abbr.
 - 29 Kate of reality TV
 - 30 Ike's old command
 - 31 Remiss
 - 36 Shamelessly bold
 - 37 Spring seg.
 - 38 Jacks
 - 41 Ancient Sumerian city
 - 42 Moist
 - 43 Mideast noble
 - 44 Story
 - 46 Unaccompanied
 - 47 List-ending abbr.
 - 48 Tear asunder
 - 51 Zodiac sign

Yesterday's answer 7-14

